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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add or amend the claims to read as follows, and cancel without prejudice or disclaimer to resubmission in a divisional or continuation application claims indicated as cancelled:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of establishing a secured direct link by an access point in a wireless local area network (WLAN) comprising:

    establishing a secured direct link between a first station and a second station of a wireless local area network by exchanging two or more secured direct link protocol messages between [[an]] the access point and [[the]] a first station of the WLAN and between the access point and [[the]] a second station of the WLAN; and

    sending secured direct link protocol messages that include pair-wise keys to the first and second stations according to a selected encryption method,

    thereby establishing said secured direct link between the first station and the second station.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, comprising:

    receiving from the first station a request to establish the secured direct link, wherein the request includes communication rate information and encryption method information.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, comprising:

    receiving from the second station a request to establish the secured direct link, wherein the request includes communication rate information and encryption method information.

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4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein establishing comprises:

sending to the second station a message to establish the secured direct link, wherein the message includes communication rate information of the first station and encryption method information of the first station.

5. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein establishing comprises:

sending to the first station a message to establish the secured direct link, wherein the message includes communication rate information of the second station and encryption method information of the second station.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 comprising:

selecting a supported communication rate from a set of communication rates.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein selecting comprises:

selecting the supported communication rate from a subset of said set of communication rates, wherein the rates in said subset are supported, at least in part, by both the first station and the second station.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, comprising:

selecting an encryption method supported by both the first station and the second station; and

generating pair-wise keys according to the selected encryption method.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein generating comprises:

generating unicast pair-wise keys for encrypting a data packet; and

generating unicast pair-wise keys for decrypting the data packet.

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10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein selecting the encryption method

comprises:

selecting the encryption method from a group of robust security network encryption

methods.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a controller to establish a secured direct link between a first station and a

second station of wireless local area network by exchanging two or more

secured direct link protocol messages with the first station and the second

station, and sending secured direct link protocol messages that include pair-wise

keys to the first and second stations according to a selected encryption method.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the controller is able to receive

from the first station a request to establish the secured direct link, the request

including a first set of communication rates and at least a type of at a supported

encryption method, and wherein the controller is further able to generate a

response message that includes at least a second set of communication rates and

the type of the supported encryption method based on information received from

the second station.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the controller is able to select

from the first set of communication rates and the second set of communication

rates a subset of communication rates that are supported by the first station and

by the second station.

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14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the controller is able to select an encryption method that is supported by the first station and the second station based on the supported type of the encryption method.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 comprising a key generator to generate pair-wise keys according to the encryption method.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the controller is able to generate two or more response messages that include a subset of communication rates and the pair-wise keys.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[17]] 16, comprising a transmitter to transmit the response messages to the first station and to the second station.

18. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
    a dipole antenna to receive and transmit two or more protocol messages; and
    a controller to establish a secured direct link between a first station and a second station of wireless local area network by exchanging two or more secured direct link protocol messages with the first station and the second station, and sending secured direct link protocol messages that include pair-wise keys to the first and second stations according to a selected encryption method.

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19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[17]] 18, wherein the controller is able to receive a from the first station a request to establish the secured direct link, the request including a first set of communication rates and at least a type of at a supported encryption method, and wherein the controller is further able to generate a response message that includes at least a second set of communication rates and the type of the supported encryption method based on information received from the second station.

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim[[17]] 18, wherein the controller is able to select from the first set of communication rates and the second set of communication rates a subset of communication rate that are supported by the first station and by the second station.

21. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[17]] 18, wherein the controller is able to select an encryption method that is supported by the first station and the second station based on the supported type of the encryption method.

22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[18]] 21 comprising a key generator to generate pair-wise keys according to the selected encryption method.

23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[21]] 22, wherein the controller is able to generate two or more response messages that include a subset of communication rates and the pair-wise keys.

24. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[22]] 23, comprising a transmitter
to transmit the response messages to the first station and to the second station.

25. (Currently Amended) A wireless communication system comprising:

an access point that includes a controller to establish a secured direct link
between a first station and a second station of wireless local area network by
exchanging two or more secured direct link protocol messages with the first
station and the second station, and sending secured direct link protocol
messages that include pair-wise keys to the first and second stations according
to a selected encryption method.

26. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication system of claim [[24]] 25,
wherein the controller is able to receive from the first station a request to
establish the secured direct link, the request including a first set of
communication rates and at least a type of at a supported encryption method,
and wherein the controller is further able to generate a response message that
includes at least a second set of communication rates and the type of the
supported encryption method based on information received from the second
station.

27. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication system of claim [[24]] 25,
wherein the controller is able to select from the first set of communication rates
and the second set of communication rates a subset of communication rates that
are supported by the first station and by the second station.

28. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication system of claim [[24]] 25,
wherein the controller is able to select an encryption method that is supported by
the first station and the second station based on the supported type of the
encryption method.

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29. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication system of claim [[25]] 28 comprising a key generator to generate pair-wise keys according to the selected encryption method.

30. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication system of claim [[28]] 29, wherein the controller is able to generate two or more response messages that include a subset of communication rates and the pair-wise keys.

31. (Currently Amended) The wireless communication system of claim [[29]] 30, comprising a transmitter to transmit the response messages to the first station and to the second station.

32. (Currently Amended) An article comprising: a storage medium, having stored thereon instructions, that when executed by an access point in a wireless local area network (WLAN), result in:

establishing a secured direct link between a first station and a second station of a wireless local area network by exchanging two or more secured direct link protocol messages between [[an]] the access point and [[the]] a first station of the WLAN and between the access point and [[the]] a second station of the WLAN; and

sending secured direct link protocol messages that include pair-wise keys to the first and second stations according to a selected encryption method,

thereby establishing said secured direct link between the first station and the second station.

33. (Currently Amended) The article of claim [[31]] 32 wherein the instruction of establishing when executed, result in:

receiving from the first station a request to establish the secured direct link, wherein the request includes communication rate information and encryption method information.

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34. (Currently Amended) The article of claim [[32]] 33, wherein the instruction of

establishing when executed, result in:

   receiving from the second station a request to establish the secured direct

link, wherein the request includes communication rate information and

encryption method information.

35. (Currently Amended) The article of claim [[31]] 32 wherein the instruction

when executed, result in:

   sending to the second station a message to establish the secured direct link, wherein

the message includes communication rate information of the first station and encryption

method information of the first station.